

Message Text

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51

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ADP-00 COA-02 EB-11 COME-00 INT-08

CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NEA-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 USIA-15 TRSE-00 MBFR-03 SAJ-01 DODE-00 SS-15

NSC-10 FAA-00 ACDA-19 RSR-01 /159 W

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P R 011650Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3918

INFO CINCLANT PRIORITY

COMICEDEFOR PRIORITY

NISRA KEFLAVIK

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USEC BRUSSELS

USOECD PARIS 503

USUN NEW YORK 363

UNCLAS REYKJAVIK 1021

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PBOR IC UK NATO

SUBJECT: FISHERIES DISPUTE AND NATO: PRIMIN'S PRESS CONFERENCE.

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: PRIMIN JOHANNESSON ANNOUNCED AT PRESS CONFERENCE AUGUST 31 THAT GOI HAD ASKED NATO TO END ASW FLIGHTS BY BRITISH NIMROD AIRCRAFT OVER ICELAND AND THAT POSSIBILITY OF EXTENDING TERRITORIAL SEA AND AIRSPACE TO 12 MILES UNDER STUDY.
END SUMMARY

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2. PRIMIN HELD PRESS CONFERENCE LATE AFTERNOON AUGUST 31, EVE OF

FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF EXTENSION OF ICELAND'S FISHERIES LIMITS TO 50 MILES. ALTHOUGH PURPOSE OF CONFERENCE WAS COMMENT ON DEVELOPMENTS OVER PAST YEAR, MOST OF PRIMIN'S REMARKS DEALT WITH EVENTS OF PAST FEW DAYS ENGENDERED BY ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF COAST GUARDSMAN. FOLLOWING MAJOR POINTS MADE BY PRIMIN DURING CONFERENCE:

3. GOI FORWARDED DEMAND TO NATO AUGUST 31 THAT ASW FLIGHTS BY BRITISH AIRCRAFT TO ICELAND BE TERMINATED IMMEDIATELY. PRIMIN SAID IDF COULD CONDUCT ALL PATROL FLIGHTS INCLUDING THOSE NOW BEING FLOWN BY NIMRODS AND USED AS "PRETEXT/ BY BRITISH TO CONDUCT SPYING OPERATIONS ON ICELANDIC COAST GUARD. HE SAID "OUR PROTECTORS" (IDF) COULD FURNISH SUFFICIENT PROTECTION BY KEEPING UP THEIR OWN PATROLS. HE ALSO SAID THAT THE BRITISH FLIGHTS WOULD BE PROTESTED IN THE UNGA.

4. GOI CONSIDERING EXTENSION OF TERRITORIAL SEA AND AIRSPACE TO 12 MILES. ACCORDING TO PRIMIN MFA LEGAL ADVISOR HANS ANDERSEN HAS BEEN ASKED TO STUDY QUESTION WITH OBJECTIVE OF DRAFTING PROPOSAL FOR PRESENTATION TO ALTHING LATER THIS FALL.

5. POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS WITH BRITISH VIEWED AS DIM. PRIMIN SAID THAT NO AGREEMENT WITH BRITISH IS LIKELY "THE WAY THINGS ARE NOW". HE NOTED AN INCREASING DIFFERENCE IN THE POSITIONS OF THE UK AND FRG. WHILE DISCUSSIONS WITH UK WILL NOT TAKE PLACE IN FORESEEABLE FUTURE, TALKS IN BONN ARE SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 6-7.

6. SEVERANCE OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH UK NOT EXCLUDED. PRIMIN SAID THAT NO DECISION HAD BEEN REACHED ON SUCH ACTION BUT "ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN". IN INTERVIEW WITH COMMUNIST DAILY THJODVILJINN AUGUST 31, FISHERIES MINISTER LUDVIK JOSEFSSON CALLED FOR IMMEDIATE END TO DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, WITHDRAWAL OF ICELANDIC MISSION FROM LONDON AND PNG ACTION AGAINST BRITISH HERE.

7. BRITISH VERSION OF LATEST COLLISION INCIDENT DENIED. PRIMIN REJECTED HMG ACCOUNT OF AUGUST 29 INCIDENT WHICH ENDED IN ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF ICELANDIC COAST GUARDSMAN AND REITERATED ACCURACY OF ICELANDIC COAST GUARD VERSION.

8. NATO INACTION NOTED. PRIMIN ONCE AGAIN CALLED ATTENTION TO UNCLASSIFIED

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FACT THAT NATO HAS NOT ACTED ON ICELANDIC REQUEST TO BRING ABOUT WITHDRAWAL OF BRITISH PROTECTION FLEET. HE SAID THAT NO DECISION HAD BEEN REACHED ON WHETHER OR NOT TO RECALL ICELANDIC PREMREP TO EMPHASIZE GOI CONCERN. HE SAID THAT "SEVERAL MEASURES ARE POSSIBLE VIS-A-VIS NATO, WITHOUT SPECIFYING.

9. SUPPORT VOICED FOR 200 MILE LIMIT. WHEN ASKED FOR COMMENT ON RECENT RESOLUTION OF OPPOSITION INDEPENDENCE PARTY FOR 200 MILE

FISHERIES LIMIT, PRIMIN SAID HE HAD NO OBJECTION TO VOICE BECAUSE
GOI HAD ALWAYS CONSIDERED 50 MILE LIMIT AS A PHASE IN STRUGGLE TO
GAIN CONTROL OF ENTIRE CONTINENTAL SHELF. HE SAID THAT HE
EXPECTED THAT THERE WOULD BE COMPLETE ALTHING UNITY ON 200 MILE
OBJECTIVE. 10. FISHERIES LIMIT VIOLATIONS RECORDED. PRIMIN
REPORTED THAT SINCE EXTENSION OF FISHERIES LIMIT ONE YEAR AGO,
ICELANDIC COAST GUARD HAD RECORDED 162 VIOLATION, 135 BY
BRITISH AND 27 BY WEST GERMAN TRAWLERS.
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